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THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF REMARKS BETWEEN
THE PRESIDENT AND LT. GENERAL
RICHARD F. CUSHMAN, JR., UPON
THE SWEARING-IN OF GENERAL
CUSHMAN AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF
THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
THE ROSE GARDEN

AT 4:11 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: The purpose of our ceremony today is the swearing-in of the Deputy Director of the CIA.

I will have some remarks about him in just a moment.

But at this point we will go forward with the ceremony and he will be sworn in by Judge Sirica of the U. S. District Court of the District of Columbia, and General Cushman's wife will hold the Bible.

(Judge Sirica administered the oath of office.)

THE PRESIDENT: Ladies and gentlemen, I want to say a personal word with regard to General Cushman.

Usually, as you know, I am not present except for the swearing-in of the Chairman or the top Directors of the agencies, but this is an exceptional case for reasons that all of you will understand.

Back in the year 1957, on the basis of a recommendation of Admiral Radford, General Cushman, then Colonel Cushman, came to my office as Vice President as my Executive Assistant. At that time there was no allocation in the funds for the Vice President for that kind of staff work. So I gave him the responsibility as my Executive Assistant and particularly in the field of national security affairs.

He did that job in a very effective way. And as a result of doing that so effectively, I gave him his added responsibilities, that of running my office and a few other things which, of course, we will well remember.

But I think you will note that he has a very distinguished career in the Marine Corps and World War II, then in Vietnam where he has been our top commander of the Marines in the I Corps area in the DMZ.

He is one of America's most distinguished men who has served us both in war and in peace and now he takes on a new assignment in the field of intelligence -- new for him in the sense of this particular duty, but not new for him in the sense of his past experience, because in the Marine Corps he had a lot of valuable experience, as Director Helms pointed out, in the intelligence field.

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What really convinced me, however, that he was fitted for this responsibility, was not his service in World War II, which was distinguished, not his work with me simply in the national security field which was distinguished, and not his work in the Vietnam war area, but a personal factor entered into it.

I recall I had a very difficult assignment at one point when I was Vice President. There came a time when it was necessary to move half of my small staff from one building to another, from the Senate Office Building over to the Capitol. As is usually the case, half the staff that had to be moved didn't want to be moved.

I knew that I was not able to handle that very, very difficult task of forcing them to move and knowing that General Cushman, then Colonel Cushman, as a Marine had experience in tough tasks, I just turned it over to him; I delegated it to him.

He accomplished it, but he came in to see me afterwards and wiped his brow and said that he had carried out the orders and that he just had one observation to make, that it was more difficult to move six secretaries from the Senate Office Building to the Capitol than it was to move a whole Division of Marines across the Pacific.

With that kind of experience and knowing the great number of fine secretaries that you will have, Mr. Helms, in the agency, I know we have here a top-notch administrator with a fine background in the military and also in intelligence.

This organization, the CIA, has a distinguished record of being bipartisan in character. It is a highly professional group. It will remain that in this Administration and General Cushman is one who is in the great tradition of service to his nation without regard to any partisan considerations.

I am delighted that he is going to work with Mr. Helms in this capacity.

GENERAL CUSHMAN: Mr. President, Mr. Helms, Audrey:

This is a great honor for me and I am looking forward, of course, to full participation. So far I have been listening to briefings and now the payoff has come -- I have to go to work.

It is with great eagerness that I look forward to this. I look upon it as an opportunity to serve my country further and to continue in helping the President fight all enemies, foreign and domestic, as was stated in the oath.

Thank you, sir, for the opportunity.

END

AT 4:17 P.M. EDT